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ARA/ECAR:REIMMERH-N (INFO)

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TO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY
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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, AR

SUBJECT: HEMISPHERIC PAROLE PROGRAM - WRITE-IN CAMPAIGN

1. DEPARTMENT IS RECEIVING NUMEROUS LETTERS CONCERNING THE LACK OF COOPERATION ON THE PART OF THE GOA TO RELEASE POLITICAL DETAINEES FOR THE 500 HEMISPHERIC PAROLE PROGRAM. TEXT OF MOST FREQUENTLY SENT LETTER IS AS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE. WE, CITIZENS OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY, ADDRESS THIS LETTER TO YOU TO EXPRESS OUR CONCERN OVER THE LACK OF IMPROVEMENT IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN ARGENTINA.

WE ARE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED BY THE DELAYS AND LACK OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HEMISPHERIC PAROLE PROGRAM ON THE PART OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT. WE THINK THAT THIS SITUATION IS UNLIKELY TO BE ENDED WITHOUT STRONG PRESSURES FROM THOSE CONCERNED.

THE ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES MUST BE NOTIFIED BY THOSE QUALIFIED TO DO SO, THAT THEIR LACK OF COOPERATION ON THIS MATTER WILL CAUSE FURTHER DETERIORATION OF ARGENTINA'S INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION AND PUBLIC IMAGE AROUND THE WORLD.

IN LIGHT OF THIS SITUATION WE ARE TAKING THE LIBERTY OF MAKING THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS:

1) THAT AMEMBASSOR FINE BE INSTRUCTED TO COMMUNICATE TO PRESIDENT VIDELA THAT THE HEMISPHERIC PAROLE PROGRAM IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECT OF UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY AND THAT FAILURE TO COOPERATE IN ITS IMPLEMENTATION IS NOT HELPING TO IMPROVE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

2) THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT INFORM OTHER GOVERNMENTS WHICH HAVE APPROVED SIMILAR REFUGEE PROGRAMS OF THE STEPS TAKEN BY THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO SOLVE THIS DEADLOCK.

WE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO IMPROVE THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION AROUND THE WORLD. UNQUOTE.

3. THE TEXT OF THE LETTER WHICH THE DEPARTMENT IS SENDING IN RESPONSE TO THIS WRITE-IN CAMPAIGN IS AS FOLLOWS:

QUOTE. AT THE OUTSET, I SHOULD LIKE TO EXPLAIN THAT OUR HEMISPHERIC PAROLE PROGRAM WHICH WAS INITIATED ON JUNE 14, 1978 PROVIDED THE OPPORTUNITY FOR 500 CASES (PERHAPS UP TO 2,000 PERSONS) INVOLVING EITHER LATIN AMERICAN REFUGEES AND/OR POLITICAL DETAINEES WHO MEET THE BASIC REQUISITES OF

OUR IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT TO BE ADMITTED TO THE UNITED STATES FOR PERMANENT RESETTLEMENT. IT HAD BEEN OUR HOPE AND EXPECTATION THAT WITH SUCH A PROGRAM WE WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THOSE REFUGEES AND/OR POLITICAL DETAINEES WHO APPLY FOR EMIGRATION AND SEEK ADMISSION TO THE UNITED STATES TO BE DULY CONSIDERED AND PROCESSED.

THERE ARE SOME 3,500 PRISONERS HELD UNDER EXECUTIVE DETENTION IN ARGENTINA PRISONS. THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT HAS REINSTATED A LIMITED "RIGHT OF OPTION" POLICY WHICH WOULD ALLOW THESE PEOPLE TO APPLY FOR VISEAS. THEY COULD POTENTIALLY QUALIFY FOR THE PAROLE PROGRAM IF THEY WISHED TO EMIGRATE TO THE U.S. AND THEY HAD NOT COMMITTED ACTS WHICH WOULD DISQUALIFY THEM UNDER THE IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION ACT.

TO DATE, ONLY SOME 50 PRISONERS HAVE BENEFITTED FROM THIS CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISION, SOME OF WHOM HAVE COME TO THE U.S.

THE UNITED STATES HAS MADE CLEAR TO THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT OUR WILLINGNESS TO WORK WITH THEM TO CONSIDER RIGHT OF OPTION CASES AND OUR HOPE THAT IN THE FUTURE THERE WILL BE MORE RAPID MOVEMENT ON THE PART OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION OF THESE PRISONERS, EITHER BY ALLOWING THEM TO OPT FOR RIGHT OF OPTION, OR BY TRYING OR RELEASING THEM.

THE UNITED STATES CONCERN OVER THE GENERAL HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN ARGENTINA HAS BEEN RAISED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK FOR AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE AREA ABOUT WHICH YOU HAVE WRITTEN TO US. UNQUOTE. CHRISTOPHER

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/TPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: () In Part (X) In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

Lot 81D208
Box4963 (2/12)